

**Community Relations Board  
Meeting Minutes  
October 16, 2013, 2 p.m.  
Stephen P. Clark Government Center, 111 NW 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Miami, FL 33128,  
Conference Room 18-4**

Comment [CA(1)]:

Comment [CA(2)]:

**I. Welcome**

Chair Richardson: Welcome to all of you, especially to our guests. There is a new State statute that provides that those who wish to speak with the Board must register so that we might have a record of them doing so. Ms. Carswell has a sheet for them to sign. Those who are not scheduled to speak as per the Agenda will be limited to three minutes.

**II. Moment of Silence**

Chair Richardson: Let us observe a moment of silence.

**III. Approval of Agenda and September General Membership Meeting Minutes**

Chair Richardson: We do not have a quorum, and we do not have the September general membership meeting minutes. I will now present the Chair's report, and perhaps we will achieve a quorum while I speak.

**IV. CRB Chair's Report**

As outlined in our ordinances and By-laws, I am supposed to present our work to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) at least once a year. Therefore, this coming Tuesday, October 22, I am scheduled to speak to the BCC on the CRB's achievements. I do not have the exact time, but typically it takes place before noon. All of you are invited to come for this presentation, which will cover my first term of office. I trust that all of you will be there.

There has been some tension in the community regarding the decision of the Supreme Court in the Dominican Republic to take away the citizenship of Haitians living in that country. As of yet, there has not been a violent response in the Haitian community, and our staff members are diligently monitoring the situation. We will keep you informed of any developments.

Mr. Ed Harris, who was previously with Commissioner Suarez' office has now joined Commissioner Edmonson's office. Mr. Harris was a CRB staff member before it was reduced. In the past, we were able to work out an arrangement with Commissioner Suarez for Mr. Harris to help us part time. We have made the same arrangement with Commissioner Edmonson. I mention that because he is helping Ms. Carswell monitor the situation of Haitians in the Dominican Republic.

Mr. Ron Fulton has been working with staff to organize a Dialogue on Race. We are working to have all of this televised and we will keep you informed.

There was a march for Justice on October 13, because of the police-involved death of a young artist, Israel Hernandez Llach. Ms. Carswell participated in the march. At some point we would like to have a dialogue with the community. Things are relatively calm, and most of the anger has been directed at the Police Department. We will keep you informed.

At the request of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), some illegal immigrants have been held in the County jails. We are seeking clarity from the County government regarding any new policies that need to be created so that there is no confusion between these ICE holds and the ordinary detainees. Deputy Mayor Genaro "Chip" Iglesias has been working on this issue.

Ms. York will speak with us at the end of the meeting about the Peace Poll event, which will be held on October 27, from 3-5 p.m. I will be one of the speakers. Thank you, Ms. York for the invitation.

I am under the impression that several of the CRB Board members consider the time we spend together once a month as being not as meaningful as it could be. With that understanding, I've developed something that may help. I've been on the Board for some time. In the past, one staff had the responsibility to keep up with "hot spots". These were hot issues or areas in Miami-Dade that had the potential to create community unrest. I would like to reinstitute that, but I would like this to be CRB-member driven. Over the next couple of weeks, I will ask staff to draft a questionnaire to help determine the current hot spots. We need to always be one step ahead of any community tensions. I will ask staff to work with CRB members to help identify these hot spots, so that we might together devise solutions. In the past, we had a list of the hot spots every month. We will follow the same protocol, and grade the issues from one to five. One will be a lukewarm issue that requires monitoring on a monthly basis. Five will be a very hot issue that requires action. I want to give you something to do between meetings.

Ahmed Kabani: These are welcome suggestions. In this matrix CRB members could present what they know about our respective communities. We need to have research data on the various communities.

Chair Richardson: I think we are saying the same thing. It was for that reason that we expanded the CRB to include the Chairs of the Advisory Boards; to make sure that we are discussing all of these issues. I hope you will all embrace this idea and get involved. Each member will be responsible for conducting the research. Every month we will have a matrix that will show where the hot spots are in Miami-Dade.

Adam Tavakoly: Is the idea to give time to each Board member to present a report on the hot issues in his/her community?

Chair Richardson: The Executive Committee will review the reports received from the members, and will be able to identify the issues that require action.

Valdes: Regarding the conflict between the Haitians and the Dominican Republic, I am a member of a Haitian grass-roots organization, and I attend their meetings. I sent a report to Ms. Carswell about the problems with the Dominican Republic. It's a volatile situation. The

Dominican Supreme Court has said that any Haitian who was born in the Dominican Republic after 1929 will not be entitled to the Dominican nationality. They are seeking to have legislation passed. There has been some violence in Santo Domingo as a result of this decision.

Chair Richardson: Hopefully before the next meeting most of you will have shared with us the hot issues in your communities. The Executive Board will then determine a list of priorities based on your submissions. I hope everyone submits something. Right now we only have two committees that are active, and this would give some direction to our work.

#### **V. Build 305: Initiatives to Involve Local Residents in Taxpayer-Funded Construction**

We are blessed today to have with us Ms. Akua Scott, Community Organizer, Southeast Laborers' District Council, who will make a presentation on Build 305: Initiatives to Involve Local Residents in Taxpayer-Funded Construction.

Scott: It is a pleasure to be here. I've known of the good work performed by the CRB for a long time. Please allow me to introduce Mr. Matthew Land, our Political Director. Build 305 emerged from the Tunnel project, in which the County demanded that the contractors hire the residents of Miami-Dade County (MDC), pay them a living wage, and provide them with health care, leave time and a pension. The contractors complied and 87 percent of those who are working on the Tunnel project are Miami-Dade residents. Build 305 works with these people, and trains them. Build 305 is putting forth new legislation in that regard before the County Commission, and we need your support.

Matthew Land: I am the Political Director with the Southeast Laborers' District Council. We are the organization behind the Build 305 initiative. Originally, when the County Commission demanded that MDC residents be hired for the Tunnel Project, the contractors said that it would not be possible to find qualified people in MDC. The County partnered with us to achieve that. Three main components emerged from the Tunnel Project: High performance of local hires; a skilled workforce; and strong transparency measures. Every month we produced reports and press releases to show the County where the workers were from; they came from all over the County. We took this model, which was very successful, and sought to transfer it to other projects. Commissioner Monestime had an ordinance that passed this past summer, which stated that the workers should come from the areas in which the construction was taking place. We worked with Commissioner Monestime on an ordinance that incorporates the three components that emerged from the Tunnel Project. In this ordinance we say that contractors have to aspire to achieve certain goals: 51 percent of the labor hours of the contract should be performed by MDC residents; there should be a skilled and safe workforce; and the workers must undergo a 10-hour safety and hazard training course. With regard to the training component, apprenticeships should be available. If you are a contractor doing business with the County, you must have an apprenticeship program. As it relates to transparency measures, we are asking that a contractor submit a responsible contractor affidavit. This would help the County select responsible contractors in the future. This ordinance is being sponsored by Commissioner Monestime, and will be considered on first hearing by the County Commission on Tuesday, October 22. It will only apply to projects that are for over \$1 million.

Scott: A couple of our volunteers, Mr. Brown and Mr. Mellerson, accompanied us today. They have been on the ground collecting signatures, to ensure that when the ordinance is considered by the County Commission, we will be able to tell the commissioners that the community supports this initiative.

Chair Richardson: What is the name of the organization behind Build 305?

Land: Build 305 is a partnership between LiUNA (Laborers' International Union of North America) and the residents of MDC. We work for the Southeast Laborers' District Council. We wanted to take the model of the Tunnel Project, which was successful, and implement it in this district. We saw that the water and sewer work is coming up, so we believed that this would be a perfect opportunity.

Fulton: I like the transparency and holding the contractors accountable. However, I have some concerns regarding the apprenticeship training, because in order to qualify, some people had to pay union dues.

Land: As it relates to apprenticeships, there are union and non-union programs. The contractor needs to make sure that he/she has the work in order to offer an apprenticeship. If the contractor works with a union and you become a union member, you will have to pay union dues; the union helps negotiate for pensions, healthcare and training. Therefore, even if you take home a little less, the union dues pay for the work that the union performs to help the workers obtain a secure, sustainable job.

Helen McGuire: What is your website?

Scott: For the bill it is [www.build305.com](http://www.build305.com), and for my company it is [www.southeastlaborers.org](http://www.southeastlaborers.org).

Herman Martinez: Are you working only on the Tunnel or do you have other projects?

Land: The Build 305 project emerged from the Tunnel project; but we also have worked on other projects.

Valdes: I am concerned about the oversight to verify the employment statistics; you should not be relying solely on the contractor's data.

Land: Part of the agreement with the County is that the contractor provides us with the names of the people who work with them. They provide us with the data, and we break it down. I don't know if this data includes the race or gender of the workers. We rely on the good faith of the contractors. We are also working on the legislation to insert an opportunity for the public to comment on the contractors. We are still working out the legalities of achieving this.

Valdes: I am concerned with transparency. The County does not have a department charged with overseeing the hiring practices of its contractors. Once a contractor is awarded a contract, he can enter into a sub-contract with another company.

Scott: We understand what you are saying, and that is why we are here; to solicit your feedback. Perhaps the CRB could be a watchdog that ensures that the contractors comply with the spirit of the law.

Tavakoly: Do all of the employees hired have to be union members?

Land: No, not necessarily; this applies equally to contractors whose employees belong to unions as well as to those whose employees are not union members.

Scott: We need your help to ensure that the jobs benefit the residents of MDC.

York: There is an ordinance already in place, Section 3, which provides that the first priority must be given to MDC residents when there are County contracts. How does your ordinance differ?

Land: I am not familiar with this Section 3 ordinance.

Rev. Gervais: I am concerned with follow-up. The CRB does not have the people to do the legwork required to follow up; we are all busy. Who will go to the companies on a quarterly basis to follow up?

Chair Richardson: What I envision, is that the CRB could put pen to paper and draft a resolution supporting the legislation.

Land: We are not asking you to be watchdogs. We need to engage the County, and that is how you could help us.

Scott: I have been going to churches and organizations to speak about this, and ask for their assistance.

Chair Richardson: How time-sensitive is it for the support from the CRB?

Land: The proposed legislation may be heard in Committee in November. The CRB's support would be timely following this, as final passage may be in December or January.

Renita Holmes: Section 3 is already a federal law, and the County has not interpreted this law correctly. The proposed legislation would help reach the correct interpretation. One of our concerns is that we have been competing with union members for quite some time. Therefore, I suggest that the developer and the union be kept separate; that the gaps for hiring be identified; that local people be made more competitive; that a monitoring component be added to the ordinance; and that your efforts be merged with those of the Section 3 coordinator.

Jeffrey Mellerson: This initiative is from the heart, and is one of the best initiatives that has been put forth in a long time. We are not trying to recreate anything, but to create something that our children can be proud of. We are asking for the CRB's support.

Chair Richardson: Thank you for your comments; they help us determine our support for this initiative. Unfortunately, we cannot take action today, but we will try to draft language to support this bill.

Valdes: I will be attending the County Commission meeting on Tuesday.

Chair Richardson: We will use our influence to see if this item can be heard around the same time as we will make our presentation on the work of the CRB.

Scott: If any of you have organizations or churches that I can visit to present this ordinance, I would be grateful.

Gervais: I would suggest that you add language to the ordinance pertaining to monitoring and follow-up.

Tavakoly: I would suggest that you reach out to the Asian-American Advisory Board, and other Boards on the 10<sup>th</sup> floor of the Government Center, to make a presentation.

York: I would suggest that you contact the Community Action and Human Services Department to make a presentation.

McGuire: I would just caution that the next time you make this presentation you clarify what data is being given by the contractor. This was my problem with the presentation, because I don't know if the data is broken down by race, age, or gender.

## **VI. Review of Proposed Amendments to the CRB Ordinance**

Chair Richardson: The next item on our agenda is the review of proposed amendments to the CRB Ordinance. Our director is proposing an amendment to our existing ordinance. This is very serious because we have been operating with this ordinance for 50 years. The Executive Committee members do not agree with the proposed changes. It is too voluminous to go into the details. Starting on the 4<sup>th</sup> page is the proposed language. The language proposed by Mr. Diaz is in regular font, and what has been approved by the Executive Committee is in bold font. We have been working on this for about four months. I will point out a couple of proposed changes that are critical. Mr. Diaz proposes that the CRB shall consist of 27 members; what we suggest is that the CRB shall consist of 32 members. Some of the Chairs of the Advisory Boards have expressed concern with having to attend so many meetings. What we suggest is that if the Chairs of the Advisory Boards cannot attend a meeting, they send a representative.

Valdes: In the past, CRB members could send a representative, but this individual did not have the right to vote.

Tavakoly: At present, the Chairs of the Advisory Boards are members of the CRB. Mr. Diaz is proposing that the Council of Chairs meet once a month. This is problematic, because we will spend too much time in meetings.

Chair Richardson: That is why we have made this suggestion, because it gives the Chairs of the Advisory Boards flexibility. Mr. Diaz also proposes that "No board member shall serve more than eight consecutive years on any board". The Executive Committee suggested that this provision be eliminated.

York: If you keep this provision, it means that the CRB will lose all of its experienced members.

Chair Richardson: We believe that institutional knowledge is needed.

Carswell: The Executive Committee members also disagreed with the proposal that "The term of all officers shall be for one year".

Chair Richardson: We suggested that the officers be allowed to serve two years. We believe that it takes an officer a year in a leadership position to become proficient. We are not taking action today; I am just highlighting areas of concern. Please read the document and give it serious consideration, so that the next time we meet, we can decide whether to accept the proposed changes.

York: In the Miami Beach CRB, I am an ex-officio member for the Commission for Women. I raised the issue that we do not have a representative from the County CRB. Mr. Ed Harris used to attend the meetings, but he no longer does now that he has joined Commissioner Edmonson's office. I wanted to be appointed officially as an ex-officio member for the County CRB in the Miami Beach CRB.

Chair Richardson: Until we vote at the next meeting, Ms. York is appointed by the Chair as an ex-officio member for the County CRB in the Miami Beach CRB.

## **VII. CRB Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement Committee**

Chair Richardson: We will now hear a report from the Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement Committee.

Smith Jackson: As co-Chairs of the Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement Committee, Mr. Shohat and I met with Ms. Carswell to prepare for the next committee meeting. We agreed on the following: we will compose a letter inviting Chiefs from all MDC police agencies to meet with us regarding community relations challenges; we will invite criminal justice organizations and community advocates to attend CRB meetings; we will invite the Miami-Dade Justice Council, the Youth Crime Task Force, and the US Attorney's Office to meet with the CRB; we will invite participants to plan our work for next year. We are setting our priorities for the next year; we want to focus on the conditions in the County jails, the treatment of the mentally ill in detention, the Stand your Ground law, and the school-to-prison pipeline. Mr. Shohat will be speaking on the Stand your Ground law at a meeting of the ABA, on October 17, from 6-8 p.m., at History Miami, Room 101C.

Chair Richardson: I plan on attending this meeting, and hopefully, other CRB members will be able to attend.

Mr. Rene Diaz, Director, Office of Community Advocacy (OCA): I have made myself available to see if you have any questions on the proposed amendments to the CRB ordinance. I apologize for my tardiness.

Chair Richardson: We will not be able to vote on this, because we do not have a quorum; I have asked the members to read the proposed amendments.

Diaz: At the next meeting, it would be appreciated if you could provide me some time to explain the proposed amendments. I noticed that some of the comments made by the CRB's Executive Committee members are not related to the ordinance, but rather to the By-laws.

Valdes: Will we reconcile what is in the proposed amendment with the By-laws?

Diaz: The ordinances are completely independent from the By-laws. What I am trying to achieve is purely administrative, and is intended to make the boards more manageable.

Chair Richardson: We look forward to discussing this with you at the next meeting.

We have two other guests in the audience. I will ask them to introduce themselves.

Camillo Majea: I am with the Miami Workers' Center. We have been active with the CRB Immigration Committee.

Terry Murphy: I am a resident of MDC, and I just wanted to observe your meeting.

### **VIII. Fair Immigration Committee**

Chair Richardson: We will now hear a report from the Immigration Committee.

Valdes: The Immigration Committee met yesterday and I thank the CRB members who attended. We will be having a summit on October 29 from 1-4 p.m., in the Commission Chambers. The issues were discussed at yesterday's (10/15) meeting and were assigned to various committee members. We invite all the CRB members to participate in the summit.

Carswell: We talked about equal treatment and due process; some of the presenters will be Maria Rodriguez, Sheryl Little, Camillo Majea, League of Women Voters, Jean-Robert Lafortune, among others. This is tentative, and we need to confirm their participation. Several commissioners should be attending, as well.

Valdes: The agenda should be completed by Tuesday or Wednesday of next week. Anyone who has been a victim of the system should come forward to make a presentation.

Chair Richardson: All of the CRB members are invited and encouraged to attend. If you have suggestions about the summit, please let Mr. Valdes or Ms. Carswell know.

Smith Jackson: We should have as many people who are affected as possible to speak, because that will have the greatest impact.

Valdes: In all of our events, we always include people who are directly affected. Three years ago, the County passed a resolution sponsored by Commissioners Souto and Martinez to assist 500 children whose parents were about to be deported because they are in the US illegally. In Homestead, we have approximately one million children in the same situation.

Carswell: We are trying to achieve three things with this event: we are trying to get the County Commissioners involved; we are trying to come up with legislative recommendations; and we are trying to give voice to these victims.



## IX. Period for Public Comment

Chair Richardson: We have addressed item 8. We are now on item 9. Ms. Holmes has put down three items that she would like to address. I will allow her to speak on one of these items.

Holmes: I would like to invite you to attend our community environmental workshops. The next one will be held on October 22<sup>nd</sup> or 23<sup>rd</sup>. The areas that we are focusing on are South Dade, District 2, District 3, and Miami Gardens. Please hold some of your meetings in the community, and perhaps you could invite the commissioner of the area to attend. It may be interesting for you to meet with the residents on environmental issues.

## X. Issues Update and Roundtable

York: This past Monday (October 14), we had our first committee meeting of the year for Relay for Life for the Cancer Society. We will have a kick-off event at the Alexander Hotel on Thursday, October 24<sup>th</sup>, at 6 p.m. You are all invited to attend these events. The Peace Poll event will be held on October 27<sup>th</sup>, from 3-5 p.m. at the Miami Beach Botanical Garden.

Fulton: There is a big disconnect with the younger generation, because they think all of the racial conflicts are in the past. I met with the producer at Miami Dade College to request his help in producing a documentary on race. In this documentary, we will interview people who lived through the segregation era. We would like to produce the documentary on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, and show it at the beginning of the Dialogues on Race.

Chair Richardson: They are doing a documentary on my family; we have been in Miami for four generations.

Fulton: This is similar to what we are seeking to do. We are requesting the assistance of all CRB members, and the Chairs of the Advisory Boards to participate in this documentary.

## XI. Adjournment

There being no other business to come before the Community Relations Board, the meeting adjourned at 4:10p.m.

	MEMBERS	PRESENT	LATE	ABSENT
				x
1	<i>Dr. Larry Capp</i>			
2	<i>Lyse Cuellar-Vidal</i>	x		
3	<i>Priscilla Dames-Blake</i>			x

4	<i>Valerie Lynn Davis-Bailey</i>			x
5	<i>Michell Dunaj Lucking</i>			x
6	<i>Ronald Fulton</i>	x		
7	<i>Rev. Eddie Gervais</i>	x		
8	<i>Martha Gonzolez-Rovirosa</i>	x		
9	<i>Ahmed Kabani</i>	x		
10	<i>Harlene Kennedy</i>	resigned		
11	<i>Maritza Lopez</i>			x
12	<i>Herman Martinez</i>	x		
13	<i>Lovette McGill</i>			x
14	<i>Dr. Helen Lawrence McGuire</i>	x		
15	<i>Dr. Walter Richardson</i>	x		
16	<i>Wilfredo Ruiz</i>	x		
17	<i>Brian Siegal</i>			x
18	<i>Rabbi Solomon Schiff</i>			x
19	<i>Edward Shohat</i>			x
20	<i>Vickie M. Smith Jackson</i>	x		
21	<i>Farzana M. Tapia</i>	x		
22	<i>Adam Tavakoly</i>	x		
23	<i>Reinaldo Valdes</i>	x		
24	<i>Dr. Harold A. Vieux</i>			x
25	<i>L. George Yap</i>			x

26	<i>Marjorie York</i>	x		
28				